Everett Link Extension

Community Engagement Guide

November 2021

SoundTransit

Table of Contents

1 Cover page
2 Table of contents
3 Land acknowledgment
4 Message from the team
5 Who we are
6 How will realignment affect transit expansion?
7 Overview
11 Audiences
12 Our commitment to you
14 Community snapshot
16 Equity and inclusion
19 Community engagement and communication tools
22 Engagement FAQs
25 Partnerships
28 How to get involved
29 Glossary

We will provide translated project materials on the project website and by request.

If we are missing your language, please call our project line at: 206-370-5533 or email everettlink@soundtransit.org, and we will do our best to meet your needs as quickly as possible. We also provide translation services over the phone and at public meetings if requested in advance.

Para obtener información sobre el proyecto, llame al 800-823-9230.

欲知關於此項目的資訊，請致電 800-823-9230.

За информацией об этом проекте обращайтесь по телефону 800-823-9230.

Para sa impormasyon tungkol sa proyektong ito, tumawag sa 800-823-9230.

Wixii macluumaad ah ee mashruuca ku saabsan, lahadal 800-823-9230.

الاتصال على الرقم التالي: 9230-823-800
لحصول على معلومات بشأن المشروع، ُيرجى

Acknowledgement of Tribal Partners

At Sound Transit we would like to acknowledge our Coast Salish Peoples, particularly the Snohomish, Suquamish, Stillaguamish and Tulalip tribes. At Sound Transit we deeply respect our Tribal Nations' right to sovereignty, and are committed to listening, learning and lifting indigenous voices. We want to acknowledge and offer our deep gratitude to the Tribal people who have been here since time immemorial. With our deepest appreciation we would like to recognize their continued stewardship and advocacy for the land and our environment.

Everett Link Extension

Message from the team

Dear community member,

I hope you and your loved ones are staying healthy and safe. I'm Erik, and I am your contact for Sound Transit's **Everett Link Extension** project.

After voter approval in 1996, 2008 and 2016, Sound Transit is expanding light rail from Seattle to Everett. The continuing COVID-19 pandemic is changing many aspects of our daily lives, but my team is committed to doing the work now that is needed to open a light rail system in Everett. Traffic and transportation are already coming back as one of the region's top concerns and your input is needed now. Over the next year, your feedback will help us evaluate potential alignment, stations and operations and maintenance facility locations during the alternatives development process. Early **community engagement** ahead of key decisions helps us plan and design a system that reflects the needs and desires of your neighborhood. There will be plenty of opportunities to engage as the project progresses, and my team and I are committed to hearing from you and adjusting our engagement methods to try to accommodate what works best for you and the community.

We put together this guide to describe the different ways you can get involved today and into the future. In this guide, you will learn how our project timeline has been affected by Sound Transit's recently adopted realignment plan, how we are adapting our communication tools to comply with social distancing guidelines for public health, and how you can expect to engage with us in the coming months. You will also read about our commitment to becoming an anti-racist transit agency and ensuring our engagement is equitable.

Your input and perspectives are important to us, and we welcome your feedback on how Sound Transit can best serve you. If you have any questions, please reach out to me anytime by phone at 206-370-5533 or email at everettlink@soundtransit.org.

Thank you and take care,

Erik Ashlie-Vinke
Government & Community Relations Manager – North Corridor

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are unable to engage with you in person. This does not change our commitment to involving you as the **Everett Link Extension** project progresses. We are adapting our communication tools to comply with social distancing guidelines for public health.

Who we are

Who is Sound Transit?

- We're connecting more people to more places to make life better and create equitable opportunities for all.
- Sound Transit is a public transit agency that plans, builds and operates regional transit service throughout the urban areas of Pierce, King and Snohomish counties.
- We are governed by an 18-member Board of Directors made up of your local elected officials and the secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation. The Board establishes policies, provides direction and oversight, and is the key decision-maker in selecting routes and station locations.
- Transit services include Link light rail, Sounder trains and ST Express bus.
- With voter approval in 2016, we are in the process of planning and building the most ambitious transit expansion in the country. Learn more at soundtransit.org/system-expansion.
- You have many opportunities to shape Sound Transit service and the development of transit projects, and we hope to hear from you.

GET UPDATES

soundtransit.org/subscribe – Check the Everett Link Extension box to receive project updates.

What is this document?

This is your guide to engaging in the **Everett Link Extension** project. It explains:

- Sound Transit's goals for the project.
- Our guiding principles for how we are engaging with your neighborhood.
- How you can get involved in the project today and into the future.
- Our proposed approach to engaging with you throughout this process.
- Our decision-making process and plan for accountability (this includes you).

See a word in **bold**?

Find it in our glossary (page 29) for more information about that term.

CHECK OUT THE GLOSSARY PAGE 29 ›

How will realignment affect transit expansion?

Realignment of project schedules and plans is required to address financial constraints

The steep rise in real estate and construction costs in the region have driven up cost estimates for future transit expansion projects. In response, the Sound Transit Board on Aug. 5, 2021, adopted a realignment plan that will serve as a framework for delivering agency system expansions as rapidly as possible. Sound Transit's target schedule for extending light rail to Everett Station is 2037. The Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) North is scheduled to come online in 2034. Sound Transit is working to achieve this target, including working to close a forecasted affordability gap of approximately $600 million. To reduce or eliminate this gap, Sound Transit is seeking to increase funding and support at the local, state and national levels and, working with partners and communities, to reduce project costs. If it is not possible to close the gap, current financial assumptions reflect it will be affordable to open service to SW Everett by 2037 and to Everett Station in 2041.

Overview

What is a representative project?

The system expansion plan approved by voters in 2016 established **Everett Link Extension's** transit mode, corridor, number of stations, general station locations and related features.

How was it developed?

The **representative project** itself is the result of extensive and yearslong planning and public involvement work.

Thanks to regional voters we are undertaking an ambitious mass transit system expansion. The **Everett Link Extension** will provide fast, reliable light rail connections to residential and job centers throughout the region, adding adding 16 miles of rail Snohomish and King counties to the regional light rail network. This project will also build an **Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) North** to support the regional network. The project extends Link service north from Lynnwood City Center to Everett Station.

Planning for this project is underway and your participation is vital to our success. Throughout the **alternatives development** phase, we will invite you to participate in a variety of public involvement opportunities that will help the Sound Transit Board with identifying a **preferred alternative**, as well as other alternatives, to evaluate in an **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**. Understanding that our friends and neighbors throughout the region may not have the time to commit to all the public involvement activities, we are making it easier than ever to share your feedback with us.

During the **alternatives development** phase, we would like to hear from you about route preferences, station and **OMF North** locations, and integration with other public transportation choices you use to get to your destination, such as bicycle/pedestrian routes, bus or rideshare services.

We strive to create outreach opportunities that are inclusive and meaningful. We will let you know about these opportunities on the project web page, through our social media channels, community newsletters, local media, our project email list and other outlets. We hope you will join us in planning Link light rail service that is valuable to all. To receive project updates, visit soundtransit.org/subscribe and check the **Everett Link Extension** box. If there is a way of communication not listed above that we should be using, please share that with us as well.

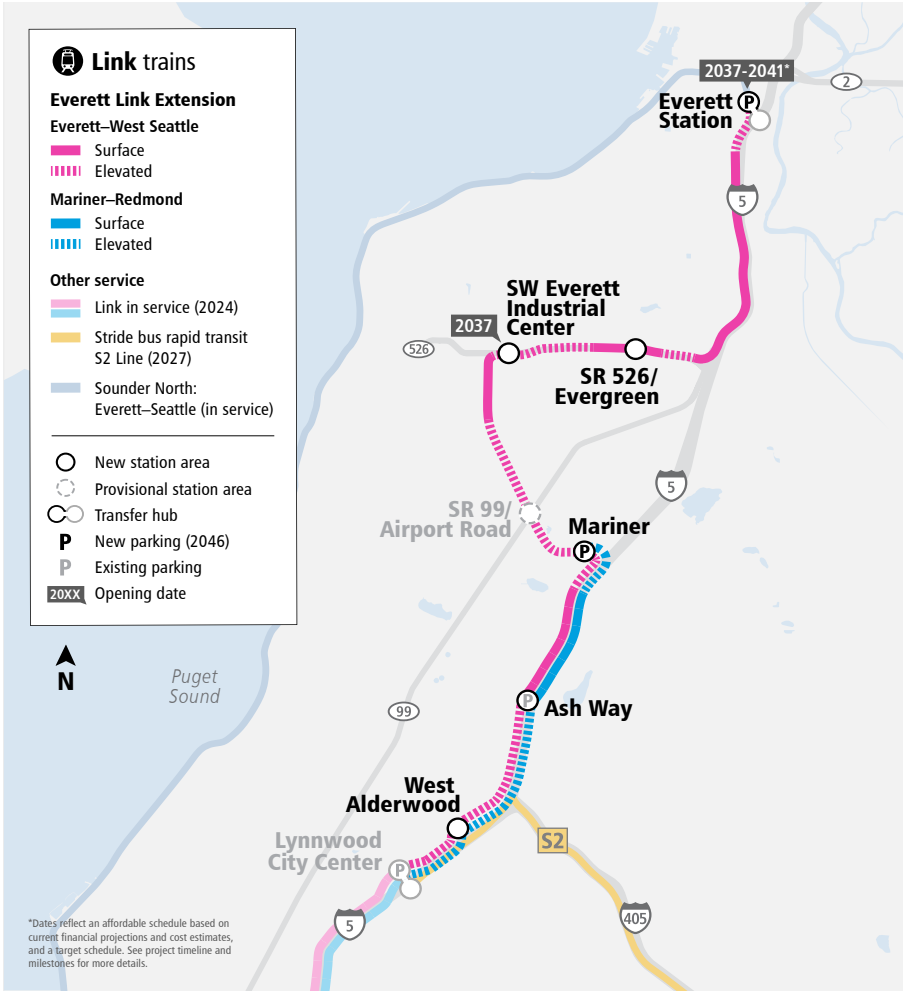
Project Map

The project at a glance:

- Sixteen miles of Link light rail.
- Six stations at West Alderwood, Ash Way, Mariner, SW Everett Industrial Center, SR 526/Evergreen and Everett Station, plus one provisional station at SR 99/Airport Road.
- **OMF North** to support the north corridor and the entire Link system expansion.

Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) North

Sound Transit needs space to receive, store, and service a larger train fleet to support future light rail extensions to Everett and throughout the region. The OMF North will support more than 450 high-skilled, well-paid jobs at the facility to repair, clean and operate the cars and tracks so that the trains can run efficiently and smoothly. The facility will require a large tract of land near the light rail line and will be designed with heavy influence from the surrounding neighborhood.



What is a provisional station?

Under the 2016 system expansion plan, provisional stations such as the one at SR 99/Airport Rd are those where planning, preliminary engineering and **environmental review** are funded, but where design and construction are not. This initial work will be utilized if additional design and construction funding become available.

What are the benefits of the OMF North?

- Creates high-skilled, living-wage jobs for people in Snohomish County. At our existing OMF, the average employee wage is more than $40 per hour, or $80,000 per year.
- Ensures thousands of passengers can rely on clean, well-maintained trains.

Locally favored options

You may have already been talking with your local jurisdiction about station locations and planning. With input from the community, Snohomish County Light Rail Communities identified locally favored options for the Ash Way and Mariner stations and provided initial analysis on the locations. Metro Everett has also identified a locally favored option for the Everett station. We will review their analyses and consider the input you have already provided on these stations as we begin our planning and engagement efforts.

Learn more about Snohomish County's Light Rail Communities:
snohomishcountywa.gov/4068/Light-Rail-Communities

Learn more about Metro Everett Subarea Plan:
everettwa.gov/1424/Metro-Everett

Anticipated schedule

Phase I: Alternatives development

- Early scoping
- Identify and screen station, route and operations & maintenance facility alternatives
- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping
- Sound Transit Board identifies preferred alternative and other alternatives to study in Draft EIS

Phase II: Draft EIS

- Prepare Draft EIS
- Conceptual engineering
- Sound Transit Board confirms/modifies preferred alternative for Final EIS

Phase III: Final EIS

- Prepare Final EIS
- Preliminary engineering
- Sound Transit Board selects project to be built
- Federal Record of Decision

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Final station & route designs
- Procure and commission station and public art
- Obtain land use and construction permits
- Begin property acquisition/relocation

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Groundbreaking
- Construction updates and mitigation
- Safety education
- Testing and pre-operations

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

**The target schedule for opening OMF North in 2034.*

Sound Transit's target schedule for extending light rail to Everett is 2037. Sound Transit is working to achieve this target, including working to close a forecasted affordability gap of approximately $600 million. To reduce or eliminate this gap, Sound Transit is seeking to increase funding and support at the local, state and national levels and, working with partners and communities, to reduce project costs. If it is not possible to close the gap, current financial assumptions reflect it will be affordable to open service to SW Everett by 2037 and to Everett Station in 2041.

Learn more about how the Sound Transit Board is responding at:
https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/realignment.

Audiences

We need many different voices to help create a system that serves everyone. We actively seek to engage a wide variety of audiences, from neighborhood and community stakeholders, to elected officials, tribal governments, partner agencies, the general public and media outlets. While we will engage with many different groups with this project, it will be imperative to engage with neighbors who live closest to the project corridor and those that the project will potentially affect. Don't see yourself on this list? Let us know! Email **everettlink@soundtransit.org**.

Neighborhood and community stakeholders

- Advocacy groups
- Communities of color
- Communities that may speak a variety of languages and/or may not speak English
- Community-based organizations
- Cultural groups
- Current and future transit riders
- Historically and institutionally underrepresented communities
- Immigrant and refugee populations
- Low-income households
- People with varying abilities
- Residential and business property owners
- Small businesses and businesses owned by people of color
- Social service organizations
- Systemically disadvantaged communities
- Tenants
- Youth and older adult populations

Strategies for engagement

- Community Advisory Group
- Community workshops
- Email updates
- Existing engagement efforts and opportunities
- Interviews and briefings
- Media
- Online
- Social media
- Pop-up outreach
- Print and digital materials (English and multiple languages)
- Property/business owner and resident meetings
- Public events and webinars

Public

People who live, work and commute in, through and around the project area.

Strategies for engagement

- Email updates
- Media
- Public events
- Online
- Social media
- Webinars

Elected officials, tribes and partner agencies

Elected officials and appointees, tribes, permitting agencies and other governmental agencies.

Strategies for engagement

- Elected Leadership Group
- Tribal engagement
- Interagency Group

Media

Print, digital and broadcast media, including community, local and ethnic media sources.

Strategies for engagement

- Media briefings
- Press releases
- Proactive engagement with journalists

Our commitment to you

You will have various opportunities to shape the development of the project. Your participation is important to ensure that your community's priorities are heard, and we hope that you will weigh in to inform our work. You can read our guiding **community engagement** principles and values on our website at soundtransit.org/everettlink.

Be proactive (Collaboration, Passenger Focus):

Engage and build long-term relationships with our project audiences early on and throughout the decision-making process.

Our commitment to you: Through a wide range of opportunities, we will invite you to learn and engage with us as the project progresses. We will focus on early and frequent engagement with stakeholders and will provide project-wide engagement opportunities to distribute information, solicit feedback on elements that affect all stakeholders in the project area, and meet communities where they are.

Be transparent (Integrity):

Foster trust through transparent communication, meaningful and equitable **community engagement** and provide timely responses to project questions and feedback.

Our commitment to you: We will set clear expectations regarding the project timeline and which project and design elements the community and stakeholders can weigh in on. We will listen and respond to stakeholder questions and demonstrate how the project team considered feedback.

Encourage awareness

Encourage local and regional awareness of the anticipated benefits, potential negative effects and progress of the project.

Our commitment to you: We will use a variety of communication tools to share information about the project and opportunities to get involved, raising awareness throughout the region about this project.

The **Everett Link Extension** project will aim to uphold Sound Transit's values of:

- Collaboration
- Passenger Focus
- Inclusion and Respect
- Safety
- Integrity
- Quality

Be accountable (Quality, Passenger Focus, Integrity):

Clearly communicate when, where and how public feedback was used to make project decisions.

Our commitment to you: We will ask communities, especially those most affected by the project, to provide input throughout the decision-making process and at key milestones. We will review and analyze this feedback and report back on how it was considered and incorporated into the decision-making process. We will also consider the planning efforts that local jurisdictions have conducted for improving transit connections in Snohomish County.

Ensure accessibility (Inclusion & Respect):

Ensure accessibility by providing information in a variety of formats so that all communities can participate and engage with us.

Our commitment to you: We will provide materials in both digital and print formats, present information in an easy-to-read, understandable and accessible format and provide translated materials in common languages spoken along the project corridor (see pg. 19 for more details).

Advance equity (Inclusion & Respect, Collaboration, Passenger Focus):

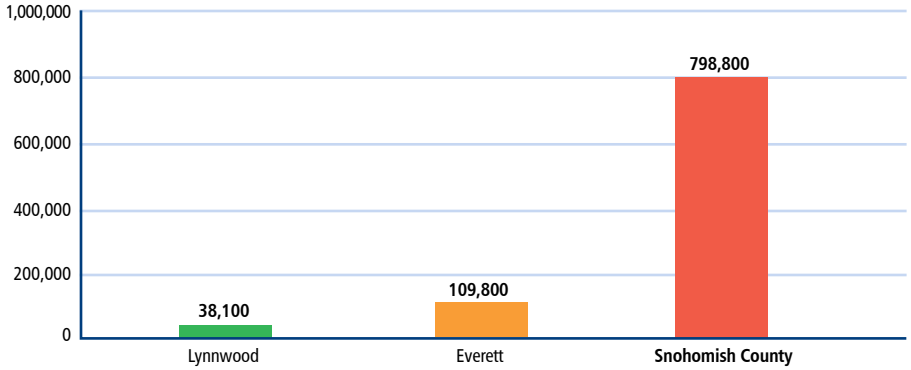
Strive for equity and inclusion by tailoring our engagement efforts to reach historically underrepresented communities.

Our commitment to you: We will engage with historically underrepresented populations and we will reflect your voices in the project. We will provide multiple opportunities and methods for engaging with the project in a manner that is most comfortable for the communities we seek to reach. We will continue to check in with stakeholders about their needs and how we can improve our outreach methods as the project progresses.

Community snapshot

Approximately 149,000 people live in 57,022 households within a 1-mile radius of the project corridor from Lynnwood to Everett. Check out the following graphics for a snapshot of demographics across the corridor. Note the "n" represents sample size.

Population estimates



Age

Older adults (>65 years): 11% (n = 17,000)

Children and young adults (<18 years): 22% (n = 32,100)

Housing (rent vs. own)

Renter occupied: 51% (n = 29,300)

Owner occupied: 49% (n = 27,800)

Translated materials

Spanish, Russian and Korean are the most common non-English languages spoken along the project corridor. We will proactively provide translated information into these languages, while remaining flexible in our approach to providing and translating information into other languages.

If you would like to receive information in another language, please contact us at (800) 201-4900, TTY Relay 711 or email main@soundtransit.org.

Linguistically isolated households

4% of households (n = 12,100) where no one age 14 or older speaks English "very well" or speaks English only.

Of these households:

27% speak Spanish

17% speak Russian, Polish or other Slavic languages

16% speak Korean

10% speak Chinese

7% speak Tagalog

Note: Language data is only available at the county level and is therefore not exclusive to the project corridor.

Race/ethnicity

White:
56% (n = 83,400)

Black or African American:
6% (n = 9,000)

American Indian or Alaska Native:
0.5% (n = 760)

Asian:
15% (n = 22,200)

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander:
1% (n = 1,600)

Some other race:
0.2% (n = 320)

Two or more races:
5% (n = 7,800)

Hispanic or Latino:
16% (n = 23,600)

Note: Data on race and ethnicity is provided by and organized by the U.S. Census into six racial categories: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Some other race, or Two or more races. Census respondents can also self-identify as Hispanic or Latino, which in this analysis is considered as a racial/ethnic group regardless of additional racial identities.

How people get around

Households without access to a car:
8% (n = 4,800)

People who drive alone to work:
71% (n = 54,800)

People who bus to work:
8% (n = 4,800)

People who walk to work:
<1% (n = 300)

People who bike to work:
2% (n = 1,800)

People who work from home:
4% (n=3,100)

Note: The percentage of people who work from home has likely risen since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Equity and inclusion

How will Sound Transit consider effects on historically underserved communities?

We are committed to integrating equity and inclusion into planning and building the project to support a more equitable transportation system. The **Everett Link Extension** project, like many **System Expansion** projects, is large and complex and will affect communities throughout the project area. We will look at potential impacts and benefits of different route, station and **OMF North** location options for institutionally and historically underserved populations, including people of color, limited English-speaking communities, people with a lower household income, people who are immigrants or refugees, older adults and people with disabilities.

As a key part of this effort, we will engage the community throughout the project. We will listen and seek to understand what about your community and its history is important to you. We will also work with you to identify ways to contribute to your community through the development of this project, such as providing jobs, green space or skill-based training and mentorship programs.

In addition, we will conduct an environmental justice analysis in compliance with federal regulations. The analysis will describe the demographics of the project corridor, evaluate whether the project would disproportionately impact historically underrepresented communities, and document our efforts to involve communities of color and low-income populations in the planning process.

Our commitment to anti-racism

At Sound Transit, we are challenging ourselves to plan, build and operate public transit that provides equitable access to housing, education, medical facilities and job opportunities, especially for those who have been most harmed by institutional and systemic racism.

We are committed to becoming an anti-racist organization and ensuring that we are creating the conditions necessary to achieve racial equality within our agency and the broader community. This means taking steps to uproot systemic racism within our organization and implementing equitable policies across our projects and services. We understand that these steps are just the beginning of our anti-racism journey and that we have a long way to go. We must and will evaluate our policies, systems and processes, and work toward an equitable future.

How will Sound Transit engage historically underserved communities throughout the project?

We are committed to reaching out to and centering the needs of institutionally and historically underserved communities in the project area as we share information, ask for feedback and answer your questions.

We will work to proactively remove barriers to an equitable **community engagement** process by:

- Reaching out to organizations that work with historically underrepresented communities in the project area to better understand and engage those communities.
- Providing translators or interpreters at public meetings and community gatherings and in online engagement settings.
- Translating materials into languages spoken along the project route.
- Designing digital materials that can be utilized by assistive technology (such as screen-readers) are accessible for those living with a disability.
- Holding smaller meetings focused on the needs of individual communities and cultures.
- Providing stipends, incentives and/or other direct means of support to reduce barriers to engagement.
- Meeting communities where they gather, such as community centers and events, houses of worship and people's homes once it is safe to do so.

Due to current Washington State Governor's orders to limit crowds during the pandemic, in-person engagement is not yet possible. Once it is safe to hold in-person gatherings, we will resume our in-person activities to meet with the community face-to-face.

Can I get project information for my community?

If you are interested in learning more about this project and how it may specifically benefit and/or affect your community, please contact us at 206-370-5533 or everettlink@soundtransit.org.

How will Sound Transit hold itself accountable for equitable engagement?

We are committed to enhancing mobility and improving quality of life for people in the corridor and region, including transit-dependent, low-income and minority populations. Sound Transit is developing a **Racial Equity Toolkit (RET)** and an **Equitable Engagement Toolkit (EET)** to assess and address impacts on racial equity. The implementation of the **RET** on this project focuses on engagement with communities and organizations most impacted by institutional and structural racism to solicit feedback and ensure their opinions are incorporated in decision-making.

How will the RET inform the outreach and engagement methods for this project?

We will focus on **community engagement** that will help us to better understand the priorities, desires and concerns of communities of color along the project corridor, and to incorporate that information into project planning and evaluation measures. Direct community input is a vital component of the **RET** process because information such as places, businesses and resources of cultural significance to communities of color cannot be inferred or understood from census data alone.

How will Sound Transit keep the community informed on the use of the toolkits?

The toolkits will help our team establish ways to measure progress toward greater racial equity outcomes in the communities we serve. We will evaluate and report out on our efforts at key project planning milestones. In addition, we conduct annual surveys in our service and project areas to monitor satisfaction with Sound Transit as an organization and with the **community engagement** process. Our team is committed to leveraging these opportunities for evaluation to also assess how Sound Transit is advancing racial equity in our communities.

We want to hear from you!

We will continue to assess and adapt our engagement tools and strategies based on what we learn from the community.

If you have ideas for how we can best engage you, share your ideas with us at 206-370-5533 or everettlink@soundtransit.org.

Community engagement and communication tools

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed many aspects of our daily lives. One thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to engaging you as the **Everett Link Extension** project progresses. We are adapting our communication tools to comply with social distancing guidelines for public health. Here is how you can expect to engage with us in the coming months:

Online

Virtual public meetings

Join us at virtual public meetings, such as webinars or town halls, to watch a presentation, speak with subject matter experts and share your input with the project team. We will provide advanced notice ahead of any virtual meeting and request interested attendees RSVP for the event. Sign up for project email updates to stay in the loop about these opportunities: soundtransit.org/subscribe.

Online open houses

Can't make the virtual public meeting or maybe you prefer to engage online at your own convenience? We will host online open houses that will mirror the virtual public meeting and in-person open house experience, in terms of the information shared and the opportunity to comment. Online open houses are accessible 24/7, so you can engage with the content on your own schedule. We will also translate online open houses into key languages spoken along the project corridor and ensure the material is accessible with screen readers for those who are visually impaired.

Community conversations

We held a series of informal virtual conversations with service providers, community-based organizations and members of the community to introduce ourselves and begin building long-term relationships with neighbors along the corridor. These conversations help us gain a better understanding of peoples' experiences, priorities, and concerns related to regional transit and the **Everett Link Extension**. We prioritized meeting with traditionally underrepresented groups. Community conversations help to identify opportunities and limitations of how the community would like to be engaged and important neighborhood assets that should be protected or enhanced as part of this project.

Webpage

Your first stop for **Everett Link Extension** information is the project webpage (soundtransit.org/everettlink) — a hub for up-to-date project information, including opportunities to get involved, upcoming events and meetings, project materials and more.

Briefings (currently online; opportunity to hold in-person once safe to do so)

Be on the lookout for the opportunity to meet with the project team through a virtual briefing. We will proactively reach out to key community stakeholders, property owners, service providers, businesses and interest groups to offer project briefings, build relationships with organizations along the corridor and help answer questions. We will also meet with partner agencies and local jurisdictions as needed or by request. If you are interested in receiving a briefing from the project team, you can reach out at any time: everettlink@soundtransit.org or call 206-370-5533.

Email updates

Subscribe to our monthly project email list: soundtransit.org/subscribe. We will share regular updates on the project and upcoming opportunities to engage. We will send email updates to people who opt in or request information via sign-in sheets at open houses and pop-up events. Stakeholders who contact us directly will automatically be subscribed to the list but may opt out at any time.

Property owner, tenant and business outreach (currently online; opportunity to hold in-person once safe to do so)

Do you own a property along the project corridor? We recognize the need for extensive outreach to property owners, tenants and businesses that may be directly affected to prevent surprises. We won't know property impacts until we are further into the environmental review process. In the coming years, we will seek to identify and learn more about the properties in the project area and begin evaluating potential impacts. You may see us reaching out in a variety of ways, including neighborhood group briefings, one-on-one meetings, workshops, round-table discussions and door-to-door visits to inform you of relevant information about specific property impacts. We will work with you to provide a direct means to get in touch with the project team and collaborate to minimize impacts when possible.

Social media

Follow along and engage with the **Everett Link Extension** project on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn. We will share project news and upcoming events on a regular basis. You can find us @SoundTransit.

In-person

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we have shifted much of our public outreach to digital platforms. However, once it is safe to hold in-person gatherings again, you can expect to find us at a variety of in-person events.

Community and neighborhood outreach

Are you a local resident or a member of this community? We understand that local neighborhoods along the project corridor have specific needs, concerns and preferences they would like us to consider in the project development process, including how best we can share information. We will reach out to community organizations, neighborhood associations and service providers to inform the **community engagement** process and ensure responsiveness to all questions and inquiries.

Open houses

Join us at open houses to learn information, speak with project staff and share your input. We look forward to hosting a series of open houses along the project corridor to help inform critical decisions during the **alternatives development** process. We will continue to offer a virtual engagement option, such as online open houses, for those who prefer to engage online.

Pop-up outreach

You can often find us at fairs, festivals and farmers markets in your local community. We want to come to the areas we work in to speak with you about the project, learn more about your interests and concerns, and help answer your questions.

Door-to-door outreach

You may see us going door-to-door to share important information with businesses, property owners and tenants, and will seek to engage with you using methods that support social distancing requirements to protect the health and safety of your family and our staff.

Other ways to engage

Existing community engagement efforts

Are you currently involved in ongoing conversations about ways to improve your community? We will work closely with our agency partners and jurisdictions to understand and assist with preexisting collaboration and planning efforts.

Informational materials

You can expect to receive mailed notifications like postcards or see posters placed at local gathering places along the corridor. We will also develop fact sheets, FAQs, infographics and other printed materials. As part of our commitment to be equitable and accessible, we will translate key materials into multiple languages (see page 15) and develop them to be screen reader-friendly for those who are vision impaired.

Media

You will see the project advertised through media outlets and digital ads during key project milestones and public comment opportunities. Media coverage can help reach audiences that might not otherwise know about the project or have an opportunity to connect. We will engage community, local, regional and ethnic media sources to ensure that we are sharing and distributing accurate project information.

Other ideas?

If you have other suggestions for how we can best reach you or your organization, please contact us at everettlink@soundtransit.org or 206-370-5533.

Engagement FAQs

Why is it important for me to engage now?

Your feedback is critical to help us determine which route, station and **Operations and Maintenance Facility North (OMF North)** locations to assess and study during the early project phases, including **alternatives development** and environmental review process, which will likely include preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (expected in **2026**). Once the Sound Transit Board selects the project to be built after completion of the EIS, the project footprint is unlikely to change significantly. To deliver system expansion projects within budget, it is difficult to revisit decisions as the project moves past final design. We will stay open to new ideas and input as we work to bring **Everett Link Extension** service online, while respecting and continuing to share the process and decisions that inform the current phase of the project.

How do I share my opinion?

There are many ways to share your opinion, including:

- Visit our website and follow @SoundTransit on social media.
- Join us at one of our public events to provide your feedback, and comment on current plans and voice your opinions at major decision points.
- Email with questions, concerns or comments: everettlink@soundtransit.org.
- Call the project line at 206-370-5533 to speak with a community engagement specialist.

We provide involvement opportunities around key project milestones and prior to making big decisions. We strive to create engagement opportunities that are inclusive, equitable and meaningful, and will announce these opportunities through a variety of communication channels.

What is the alternatives development process and what type of feedback are you looking for during this phase?

The alternatives development process is a project phase during which Sound Transit will assess the representative project included in the 2016 system expansion and, based on additional public engagement and technical analysis of alternatives, further refine the specific route, station locations and other project elements. During this phase of the project, we will be looking for your insights into your local community and feedback on:

- Routes.
- Station locations.
- **OMF North** location.
- Potential benefits and impacts.

What is scoping?

Scoping is one of the first steps in the alternatives development phase, a process during which Sound Transit seeks public input that will help us refine the project. Input received now and later during the alternatives development phase will help inform the Sound Transit Board as they identify a preferred alternative and other alternatives to study in more detail during the environmental review process. This early scoping period is an opportunity to:

- Learn about the project background and timeline.
- Provide input on potential alternatives for station, route and OMF North locations to help inform the decision-making process.
- Comment on the draft purpose and need of the project.
- Help identify and provide feedback on potential project benefits and impacts on your community, the environment and transportation.

What is environmental review?

The **environmental review** is an evaluation of potential environmental effects, both impacts and benefits, of building and operating the light rail system. The environmental review documents are made public to inform residents, agencies and decision-makers about the environmental consequences of building and operating the project.

How are you integrating previous engagement and input from local jurisdictional processes?

You may have already been talking with your local jurisdiction about station locations and planning. With input from the community, Snohomish County Light Rail Communities identified locally favored options for the Ash Way and Mariner stations and provided initial analysis on the locations. Metro Everett has also identified a locally favored option for the Everett station. We will review their analyses and consider the input you have already provided on these stations as we begin our planning and engagement efforts.

How has public input shaped the representative project?

The **representative project** reflects years of public engagement, starting with the Lynnwood to Everett High-Capacity Transit Corridor Study in July 2014; the Long-Range Plan update in December 2014; and the system expansion plan development during 2015 and 2016. Public involvement during those efforts developed the **Everett Link Extension** project, including the **OMF North**, that will serve as a starting point for developing more refined alternatives.

How will Sound Transit use your input for this project?

Your feedback has influence over long-term decisions such as determining a preferred route to study in the EIS phase, as well as station locations and a north-end **Operations and Maintenance Facility** location to assess and study during the **alternatives development process**. Early **community engagement** helps us plan and design a system that reflects the needs and desires of your neighborhood. Community input was influential in the development of the **representative project** we are sharing with you today. Community engagement will continue through all phases of the project and your input is key to the project's success.

How can I stay up to date on this project?

Visit soundtransit.org/everettlink to sign up for our project email list! This is the best way to stay up to date on any future events and/or feedback opportunities.

Can you provide information about this project in other languages?

We will provide translated project materials on the project website and by request. If we are missing your language, please call our project line at 206-398-5070 or email everettlink@soundtransit.org, and we will do our best to meet your needs as quickly as possible. We also provide translation services over the phone and at public meetings if requested in advance.

Para obtener información sobre el proyecto, llame al 800-823-9230.

欲知關於此項目的資訊，請致電 800-823-9230.

За информацией об этом проекте обращайтесь по телефону 800-823-9230.

Para sa impormasyon tungkol sa proyektong ito, tumawag sa 800-823-9230.

Wixii macluumaad ah ee mashruuca ku saabsan, lahadal 800-823-9230.

الاتصال على الرقم التالي: 9230-823-800 لحصول على معلومات بشأن المشروع، يُرجى

Partnerships

Implementing this and other projects with the scope, budget and schedule approved by the voters will take extraordinary effort by Sound Transit and its federal, state and local partners. To meet the challenge of delivering projects as quickly as possible, Sound Transit developed a **System Expansion Implementation Plan** that embraces new ways of working together. Those adjustments include internal changes at Sound Transit, as well as new approaches to working with project partners, local jurisdictions, elected officials, community members and the public.

Public

As a member of the public, we ask that you communicate your ideas, concerns and questions about the project through a variety of communications channels to:

- Learn about the project and ask questions.
- Provide feedback on topics and issues that interest you.
- Let Sound Transit know how you would like to engage.
- Share information and discuss the project with your community.

Community Advisory Group

The Community Advisory Group (CAG) will provide a forum for community members to inform the development of alternatives for the project. The group will include residents, transit riders, business owners and representatives of organizations that reflect the diversity found throughout the corridor, including groups with currently and historically reduced access to opportunities. The CAG is made up of people who know the community and can provide valuable insight as we develop the project. CAG members will:

- Learn about the project and ask questions.
- Be of diverse representation.
- Aim for consensus around key project decisions and work through project issues as needed.
- Make recommendations at key milestones.
- Highlight specific issues and trade-offs in the corridor, including opportunities and tools to best engage the community in this process.
- Present recommendations for consideration.

Interagency Group

Sound Transit will work closely and coordinate with a number of agencies and governments as this project moves forward, including but not limited to:

- City of Everett.
- City of Lynnwood.
- Snohomish County.
- Puget Sound Regional Council.
- Federal Transit Administration.
- Washington State Department of Transportation.
- Community Transit.

The group will convene throughout the planning process until the Sound Transit Board identifies a **preferred alternative** and other alternatives to carry forward in environmental review.

Elected Leadership Group

The Elected Leadership Group (ELG) is comprised of elected officials who represent communities along the project corridor, and Sound Transit Board members. The purpose of this group is to inform Sound Transit's decisions and work through project issues as needed. Meetings will align with key project milestones, be open to the public and include an opportunity for public comment.

The ELG will:

- Consider the needs of the **Everett Link Extension** corridor within the context of the regional transit system.
- Work with project staff to understand and evaluate preliminary design options and trade-offs.
- Represent the communities they serve and share community priorities and local context.
- Seek to form consensus on group recommendations to inform the project to be built and brought to the Board for formal action.

Sound Transit Board

The Sound Transit Board oversees the implementation and delivery of the project and has final authority on major project decisions. These decisions include the identification of a **preferred alternative** prior to starting environmental review, and selecting the project to be built after the **conceptual engineering** and **environmental review** process is complete.

The Board will consider recommendations and feedback from the Community Advisory Group, Elected Leadership Group, Interagency Group and the public when making decisions.

Tribes

In partnership with Sound Transit's Tribal Relations director, the project team will consult with Washington state tribes throughout the project development process.

How to get involved

Looking for the best way to contact us?

Email your questions, concerns or comments to ***everettlink@soundtransit.org***

CONTACT US

CALL the project line at 206-370-5533 to speak with a community engagement specialist

EMAIL with questions, concerns or comments everettlink@soundtransit.org

GO ONLINE

Respond to online SURVEYS

Learn about the project soundtransit.org/realignment

GET INVOLVED

Subscribe to EMAIL UPDATES

Follow us on SOCIAL MEDIA @SoundTransit

PUBLIC EVENTS

Join us at one of our public events to provide your feedback, and comment on current plans and voice your opinions at major decision points.

PROPERTY OWNER AND TENANT OUTREACH

Sound Transit will proactively reach out to affected property owners and tenants to consult about the project's impacts. Property owners and tenants can provide their feedback and comment on current plans.

BRIEFINGS

Request a briefing or meeting with us; we are happy to meet with you or your community group online with opportunities to hold in-person briefings once safe to do so.

Glossary of terms

Alternatives development

Project phase during which staff will assess the original project included in the 2016 system expansion and, based on additional public engagement and technical analysis, further refine the specific route, station locations and other project elements. The goal of the **alternatives development** phase is analyzing a wide range of options to help inform the Sound Transit Board in identifying **preferred route and station locations** and other alternatives that warrant further study.

Community engagement

A process that engages community members in a public dialogue about an issue that affects them.

Conceptual engineering

Process evaluating concepts of engineering that occurs during alternatives development and **environmental review phases** of a project. Engineering concepts will illustrate general design ideas and can be used to identify broad impacts or benefits, identify engineering constraints, and allow development of preliminary cost estimates.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

A document used for decision-making that analyzes impacts of project alternatives under state and federal law. Sound Transit will likely prepare one **EIS** for **EVLE** to satisfy both state and federal environmental review requirements.

Environmental review phase

The environmental review process informs the public, agencies and decision-makers about the potential environmental consequences of building and operating the project prior to Sound Transit Board's decision on the project to build.

Equitable Engagement Toolkit (EET)

The **Equitable Engagement Toolkit** creates a process and a set of questions to embed consistent, equitable and inclusive **community engagement** practices into our organizational culture.

Everett Link Extension (EVLE)

Everett Link Extension is the project name. The project will add 16 miles and at least six new stations of light rail service connecting Snohomish County residents to the regional light rail network.

Locally favored alternatives

Independent of Sound Transit's planning process, local jurisdictions identified **locally favored alternatives** for some of the stations with input from the community. We will review their analyses and consider the input you have already provided on these stations as we begin our planning and engagement efforts.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

NEPA requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. The range of actions subject to **NEPA** is broad and includes constructing highways and other publicly owned facilities. The lead federal agency for the **EVLE** is the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Using the **NEPA** process, FTA will evaluate the environmental and related social and economic effects of the **EVLE** project and obtain public and agency input prior to issuing a **Record of Decision**.

Operations and Maintenance Facility North (OMF North)

A facility where Link trains go for cleaning, storage and care, which is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. A new **OMF** in the North Sound is necessary to receive, store and service a larger train fleet to support the future light rail extensions to Everett and throughout the region. To build this new facility, we need approximately 60-70 acres near the light rail line in Snohomish County.

Preferred alternative

Under **NEPA**, a **preferred alternative** is the alternative that the lead agency believes would fulfill its statutory mission and responsibilities giving consideration to economic, environmental, technical and other factors. At the end of the **alternatives development** phase, the Sound Transit Board is expected to identify a **preferred alternative** to carry forward into environmental review for more detailed study. The **preferred alternative** would identify the preferred route, station, and **OMF North** locations. After public and agency comments are received on the Draft **EIS**, the Board will confirm or modify the **preferred alternative**. The Board's final decision on the alternative to be built will not take place until after the Final **EIS** is issued.

Racial Equity Toolkit (RET)

The **Racial Equity Toolkit** lays out a process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs, and procedures to address effects on racial equity. The **RET** process also supports Sound Transit's Environmental Justice analysis to be included in the **Environmental Impact Statement.**

Realignment

The steep rise in real estate and construction costs in the region have driven up cost estimates for future transit expansion projects. In response, the Sound Transit Board on Aug. 5, 2021, adopted a realignment plan that will serve as a framework for delivering agency system expansions as rapidly as possible.

Record of Decision (ROD)

This action completes the environmental process and authorizes final design, then construction of the project. The **Record of Decision** defines mitigation commitments and other requirements for the project following the recent completion of the Final EIS.

Representative project

The voter-approved Sound Transit 3 (ST3) ballot measure included representative projects that were publically vetted after years of community engagement. They formed the basis for project elements and budgets contained in the ballot measure, and also established the transit mode, approximate route, number of stations, general station locations, and which corridors would have light rail operations and maintenance facilities. The representative project for the Everett Link Extension is now the starting point for alternatives development. Moving ahead, Sound Transit will also be incorporating recent planning work done by local partners as well as input from the community and others to identify other reasonable alternatives that are consistent with the voter-approved ballot measure.

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)

SEPA requires that all local and state governments in Washington consider environmental information before committing to a particular course of action, including construction of public facilities. Sound Transit is the lead agency under **SEPA** for the **EVLE**. Using the **SEPA** process, Sound Transit will evaluate the environmental effects of the **EVLE** and obtain public input prior to the Sound Transit Board's selection of a project to build.

Scoping

Scoping is a public process that engages the public, agencies and Tribes to provide feedback and comments to help evaluate and compare project alternatives.

System Expansion Implementation Plan

A plan that describes Sound Transit's approach to delivering the expanded system of projects as well as needed reforms based on lessons learned from delivering major capital infrastructure to date. The most resent system expansion plan was approved in November 2016, which included the Everett Link Extension.

CONTACT US

Visit our webpage and sign up for project news
soundtransit.org/everettlink

Email everettlink@soundtransit.org

Call 206-370-5533

SoundTransit